

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration and allowance of this application are requested.

By way of the amendment instructions above, the subject matter of claims 10, 13 and 14 have been incorporated into claim 1. As such, the amended version of claim 1 should be allowable in view of the Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter on page 3, line 4 of the subject official action. Claims 10 and 13 have thus been cancelled as redundant while claim 14 has been further revised so as to be consistent with the language now employed in the amended version of claim 1.

Thus, the claim amendments above render moot all art-based rejections of record advanced herein.

Claim 15 has been amended to clarify that the step of controlling the thickening of the pulp further comprises controlling the thickening of the pulp in response to a process signal obtained from a previous or later process stage. Support for such an amendment may be found on page 15, lines 1-13. Thus, reference to an "impulse" employed in prior claim 15 was meant to embrace a process signal obtained from a previous or later process stage, which process signal may, for example, be a signal relating to consistency regulation of the knotters which are located upstream of the pre-thickener according to the present invention which in turn is located upstream of the washer or filter subsequent in the process.

Accordingly, it is suggested that the rejection under 35 USC §112, second paragraph advanced against claim 15 has likewise been overcome.

Claim 26 is new and essentially represents a combination of claims 1, 9 and 13-15. It is submitted that new claim 26 is allowable for at least those reasons already made of record and/or noted for claim 1.

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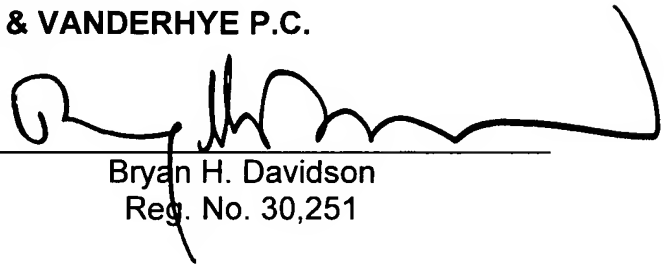
It is believed that the further amendments to the claims are commensurate with the indication of allowability noted by the Examiner and thus early receipt of the Official Allowance Notice is awaited.

Should any small matter remain outstanding, the Examiner is encouraged to telephone the applicant's undersigned attorney so that the same may be resolved without the necessity of an additional action and reply.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: _____

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Bryan H. Davidson', is written over a horizontal line. The signature is stylized with a large initial 'B' and a long, sweeping tail.

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